



NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) increased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.8 percent in April as seen in Northeast Table 1. Year-over-year, the LMA's unemployment rate decreased two-tenths of a percentage point. The rate in all four counties that comprise the LMA increased, though they were well below the state's unemployment rate, ranging between 3.5 to 4.6 percent; Butte County showed the largest percentage increase at five-tenths of a percentage point. Year-over-year, the counties all showed decreases in the unemployment rate with the exception of an increase of seven-tenths of a percentage point in Butte County. Because Butte County has a low population, the unemployment rates can fluctuate with very small changes; the number of unemployed persons increased by nine from March to April and the *Civilian Labor Force* dropped by only one person. From April 2002, the number of unemployed persons in Butte County only increased by 11. Changes at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) also have been a factor in the rate change. See *State Table 1 on page 3 for April 2003 county and LMA labor force data.*

Other counties in Northeast Idaho experienced changes over the month, but most increases and decreases involved industries directly or indirectly related to farming activity. Teton County showed the largest increase over the month while in a lull between winter and summer tourism seasons. Year-over-year, there was very little change with the exception of Custer County, which decreased 2.2 percentage points. The county was still feeling the effects of mine layoffs in the rate

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	April 2003*	March 2003	April 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	82,940	83,660	82,790	-0.9	0.2
Unemployment	3,170	3,010	3,340	5.3	-5.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	3.6	4.0		
Total Employment	79,770	80,660	79,440	-1.1	0.4
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	81,640	81,650	82,190	0.0	-0.7
Unemployment	2,920	3,350	3,020	-12.8	-3.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	4.1	3.7		
Total Employment	78,720	78,310	79,170	0.5	-0.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	62,340	61,820	62,080	0.8	0.4
Goods-Producing Industries	9,920	9,370	9,330	5.9	6.3
Natural Resources & Mining	70	60	80	16.7	-12.5
Construction	4,580	4,050	4,120	13.1	11.2
Manufacturing	5,270	5,260	5,130	0.2	2.7
Food Manufacturing	2,690	2,690	2,880	0.0	-6.6
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	290	290	250	0.0	16.0
Machinery Manufacturing	450	460	400	-2.2	12.5
Other Manufacturing	1,840	1,820	1,600	1.1	15.0
Service-Providing Industries	52,420	52,450	52,750	-0.1	-0.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,850	13,980	14,500	-0.9	-4.5
Wholesale Trade	4,750	4,790	5,150	-0.8	-7.8
Retail Trade	7,280	7,340	7,700	-0.8	-5.5
Utilities	100	110	100	-9.1	0.0
Transportation	1,720	1,740	1,550	-1.1	11.0
Information	830	800	940	3.8	-11.7
Financial Activities	2,050	2,050	2,080	0.0	-1.4
Professional & Business Services	11,460	11,450	11,710	0.1	-2.1
Educational & Health Services	6,250	6,280	5,890	-0.5	6.1
Leisure & Hospitality	4,660	4,600	4,570	1.3	2.0
Other Services	2,240	2,210	2,260	1.4	-0.9
Government Education	5,140	5,210	5,150	-1.3	-0.2
Government Administration	5,940	5,870	5,650	1.2	5.1

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

reflected in 2002. Idaho Falls, the largest city in Northeast Idaho and the LMA, increased three-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month, but showed no change from April 2002 with a current unemployment rate of 3.8 percent.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs in the LMA increased by 520 from the previous month for a total of 62,340 jobs. Again, *Construction* is the single largest contributor with a gain of 530 jobs overriding losses mostly seen in the *Service-Providing Industries*. *Retail Trade* lost 60 jobs from March to April during the slower selling season, while *Government Education* lost 70 jobs with statewide budget cuts tightening up the education process.

Year-over-year, the LMA showed a job increase of only 260 jobs, with large changes noted in various industries. *Construction* continues

to be strong, particularly in Bonneville and Jefferson Counties, in both residential and commercial sectors, and shows an increase from April 2002 of 460 jobs. Significant gains also occurred in *Educational and Health Services* (360 jobs) with the expansion of Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, as well as new offices in specialized medicine that have moved into the area. Mountain View Hospital also started operation on a smaller scale in the fall of 2002. *Government Administration* experienced an increase of 290 jobs with a nearly non-existent winter and very early spring allowing early clean-up and beautification projects to begin. *Wholesale Trade* and *Retail Trade* combined lost 820 jobs, some from trickling effects of national economic activity. *Professional and Business Services* lost 250 jobs, again from the national economic activity and from earlier layoffs at the INEEL. Although a loss of 190 jobs was seen in the *Food Manufacturing* sector of *Manufacturing*, gains in the other sectors prevailed to show an overall gain of 140 jobs in *Manufacturing*.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- North Wind Construction was launched by parent company North Wind, Inc., a company specializing in remediation and environmental services. The new division was created to give the company greater flexibility, better quality control, and faster customer service for the many construction tasks the company had previously hired subcontractors to do. The company will now be able to satisfy customers with civil engineering and other construction needs. Mark See, division manager, has 18 years of experience in heavy civil construction, mining, tunneling, and remediation/reclamation projects.
- Two new restaurants will be opening in Ammon: Chuck-A-Rama and Golden Corral. Chuck-A-Rama buffet will open near the new Wal-Mart location on Hitt Road. The restaurant specializes in scratch cooking using fresh produce, and avoids using mixes, powders, or frozen produce. Chuck-A-Rama was founded in 1966 in Salt-Lake City. This location will be the company's tenth restaurant. Golden Corral buffet is opening at the corner of Sunnyside and Hitt Roads. Golden Corral is a franchised family steakhouse restaurant known nationwide, but is found most frequently in the southern states. Both restaurants are expected to celebrate their openings no later than November.
- Master glassblower and Idaho Falls native Dick Burkhalter opened a new shop at 545 Shoup Avenue, Suite 107 (the remodeled Rogers Hotel). Burkhalter has over 30 years experience in glassblowing and has spent the past 16 years in Arizona at his trade. His business hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.
- TrendWest of Redmond, Washington, opened a sales office on Jennie Lee Drive in Idaho Falls. The company specializes in vacation rentals at resorts in the U. S., Mexico, Canada, Australia, and Fiji. The company uses a credit system that allows clients to enjoy visits at multiple resorts without being locked into any one location. The company is a subsidiary of Cedant Corporation of New York. Other Cedant subsidiaries include Century 21, Coldwell Banker, and ERA, hotel chains such as Howard Johnson and Super 8, Avis and Budget car rental companies, and Jackson Hewitt tax preparers.
- Argonne National Laboratory and Bechtel BWXT, Idaho (both companies of the INEEL) are experiencing layoffs. Argonne laid off approximately 20 Idaho employees in May. The facility, operated by the University of Chicago, specializes in nuclear fuel research and energy security. Most workers were in technical support and the company stated layoffs were necessary to change its mix of workers. Bechtel announced that it could lay off several hundred workers between now and into the winter as it also reorganizes, mainly to dissolve new projects set up before changes in its mission were announced. Between 100 to 500 employees or more could be affected by the series of layoffs.
- The North Forty Family Fun Center located on North Yellowstone Highway in Idaho Falls has expanded its package of fun. Over the last six months, the center revamped the miniature golf course into a Hillbilly Olympics theme, installed a mechanical bull, and added entertainment to its weekends. Karaoke is offered Friday nights and live bands perform on Saturdays. Since it is designed for families, the environment is both smoke-free and alcohol-free. Hillbilly Olympics includes Frisbee throwing, horseshoe pitching, and rubber chicken throwing. Visit www.northfortyfun.com for more information.

Tanya Albán, Regional Labor Economist
150 Shoup Avenue, Idaho Falls, ID 83402
(208) 557-2500, ext. 3587
E-mail: talban@jobservice.us